

In This Issue...

Psoriasis is like....

Myth Buster

PsA Survey

What to expect when you're expecting!

How pregnancy can affect your psoriasis

Congratulations, you are having a baby! As you embark on this new stage of life and all the joys and fears that come with expecting a little one, it is natural to worry about how pregnancy can affect your psoriasis.

Having psoriasis does not affect a woman's fertility or her ability to conceive and carry a healthy baby to term. But there are things you should consider before trying to have a baby and how to manage your psoriasis while you are pregnant.



Like everything else related to psoriasis, your body can react differently to different triggers, treatments and health changes. Pregnancy is no exception. But the good news is you may actually get a reprieve from your symptoms. According to the National Psoriasis Foundation, about 50% of women who are pregnant experience improvement with their psoriasis. While this is good news, about 25% see no change in their condition, and the remaining 25% can have worsening of their disease.

Regardless of how your body and psoriasis reacts to being pregnant, managing and treating your psoriasis while you are expecting (or while you are breastfeeding) can be challenging. While some medications are quite safe to use, there are others that should definitely be avoided. This is because some medications can be passed on to a fetus or to a nursing baby through breast milk. For exam-

ple, methotrexate (a common psoriasis treatment) is to be avoided while pregnant since it can cause miscarriages and birth defects. It should also not be taken by either men or women at least 12 weeks before even trying to conceive a baby. All retinoids should also be avoided due to the high risk of birth defects and should also not be taken when trying to conceive.

As for biologics and biosimilars, there is currently not enough information on how a biologic may affect a fetus or a nursing baby in the long term. Since there is limited information, use of biologics should only be in considered in close consultation with your doctor to weigh the benefits versus the risks of continuing the treatment. If you are one of those 25% that either have no change or have worsening symptoms, there are treatments for psoriasis that are still safe during pregnancy. The safest medications to take are topicals, especially moisturizers and emollients. Narrow band ultraviolet light B phototherapy is also an option.

It is not uncommon for women to experience a flare up within 6 weeks of delivering their baby, but the flare is usually no worse than any you would have had prior to getting pregnant.

So, while the good news is that there is a strong chance that you may find improved psoriasis while pregnant, you should always consult with your doctor before you even consider trying to conceive, to allow yourself and your baby the best chance for a safe and healthy pregnancy.

Source: [National Psoriasis Foundation](http://www.nationalpsoriasisfoundation.org)

Do you Follow Us?



Living with PsA

Are you living with Psoriatic Arthritis?

Do you care for someone who has PSA? We want to hear from you! We want to know what life is like living with Psoriatic Arthritis.

Please take our survey and let us know more about living with Psoriatic Arthritis.



www.surveymonkey.com/r/PsA3

Myth Buster

Myth: : I don't need a flu shot since psoriasis is caused by an overactive immune system – so I am protected.

Fact: Psoriasis does not protect you from general infections such as the flu. Theoretically, many of the injectable or oral medications used to treat psoriasis can potentially increase the risk of you catching a cold or flu. Psoriasis patients are encouraged to get a flu shot annually but should only receive inactivated vaccines (given as a shot) vs the active forms of the flu shot (given as a nasal spray). Any injection may trigger a flare-up of psoriasis symptoms, but most people are able to receive an injection without issue. If you do get the flu you should always talk to your doctor.

Psoriasis is like....

We recently asked you to use a metaphor to describe what having psoriasis was like. We received some amazing and creative responses. We are now featuring them on Facebook. If you have a metaphor to describe what psoriasis is like, email us at info@canadianpsoriasis.ca



CAPP would like to thank our medical advisor Dr. Dan Adam for his medical review of this newsletter.

Did you know?



Did you know that Russian Dictator Joseph Stalin had psoriasis? In fact, he had his doctor promoted when the treatment he had gave him was working and cleared his skin. Unfortunately, Stalin experienced a flare up, and rather than just having his doctor fired, he actually sent him to a firing squad and had him executed!

New and improved

Have you been to our Facebook page lately?

We have merged our two [Facebook](#) pages into one huge, vibrant community of over 17,000 Canadians living with psoriatic disease, as well as their families and caregivers. Our page is full of news, information, and lively discussions about living with psoriasis. Be sure to invite anyone you know who is living with psoriasis to join the conversation on Facebook! We have lots of great ideas for new campaigns in the new year!



CAPP is grateful for the support of our sponsors for making this newsletter possible.



Canadian Association of Psoriasis Patients
15 Capella Court, Unit 109 • Ottawa • ON • K2E 7X1
www.canadianpsoriasis.ca • 613-224-4266 • info@canadianpsoriasis.ca